**THE PROCESS ESSAY**

Process: Process writing is “how to” writing. You explain a process or tell the reader “how to” do a process – in a series of steps, usually. A process can either be INFORMATIVE: explain how a process is done (how a star goes nova; how a black hole is formed) or be DIRECTIVE: tell the reader how to do a process (how to make good grades, how to change a tire). Unlike any other kind of formal writing, using second person, "you," is acceptable for a directive process essay. Organize your process chronologically and divide your process into steps. Clearly differentiate your steps with transitions (First, Second, Next, Then, Finally, etc.). Make sure you know your process well – if you do not, you will not be able to write a good essay.

**The requirements of this essay are as follows:**

1. In this essay you will write about something that a friend or relative taught you to do. In telling the story of how you learned to do this process, you will be teaching the reader how to do it as well. This essay should read like a narrative, for example, you might tell the story of how your aunt taught you how to bake cookies or play the piano.

2. The essay should be 2-3 pages in length. MLA format is required.

3. The instructions given in the essay should be clear. Even though it is a narrative, the steps should be easy to follow. After reading the essay, the reader should be able complete the task with no difficulty.

4. To avoid having an essay that sounds like an instruction manual or recipe card, include personal commentary and interesting or amusing facts throughout. For example, if you are explaining how to make spaghetti, you might want to include what vegetables you like to use in the sauce and tips on how to choose the best ones.

5. Be sure to include transitions to make the paper read smoothly. "First," "After," "Then," and "Next" are just a few that move the reader along. Try to beef up your transitive words by using conjunctive adverbs.

An outline is required for this essay. An example outline is on the following page. Outline must be typed out and be in complete sentences. Turn in outline with final essay.

**Due Date: Friday March 24th -** Please have a hard copy of both your outline AND your paper.

Sample Outline of Process Essay

I. Introduction (one paragraph)

A. Background information or any other relevant information about your story in general. Introduce the friend or relative who taught you the activity and explain why they did (i.e. "When I was fifteen, my father decided that I was old enough to change the oil in the car. He said that when I got my driver’s license, I could use the car as long as I took care of it.")

B. Specific Topic and Thesis of Essay (i.e. "I found out that it is really easy to change the oil in our car and that it is cheaper than taking it somewhere to have it done.")

II. Body (at least three paragraphs--do not limit yourself, though)

A. Preparation and Materials

1. Hints and tips with help fill out your paper

B. Step by Step Instruction

1. Commentary about what you've learned to do or avoid is great, but don't go to far off topic!

C. The Finished Project

1. Finishing Touches and other relevant info. (i.e. "Many places will let you recycle old oil. My dad takes his to the Texaco in town.")

III. Conclusion (one paragraph)

A. Restate major points (stages of the process)

B. Restate thesis - don't just cut and paste from intro! (i.e. "Once I learned to change the oil, I found out that it was easier than I thought to maintain a car.)